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ABSTRACT

This review of the history of special education in Nashville, Tennessee, from 1940 to 1990 focuses on two issues: first, how advocacy for children with disabilities and research changed the practice of special education after World War II in Nashville; and second, how the internal dynamics of the schools in Nashville shaped special education during this period. The review involved more than two dozen oral history interviews and examination of archival material such as hundreds of newspaper articles. The review concludes that both research and advocacy have been particularly important in program development within the Nashville public school systems, especially when pilot programs could be established with minimal disruption to organizational routines. The influence of research and advocacy on specific pedagogy, both teaching methods and quality of teachers, was more difficult to ascertain since experimental programs were often dependent on existing teachers who lacked necessary training. Individual sections address: successful long-term influences, influences without clear success, and the greater success of pilot programs outside existing public schools. A concluding section addresses the importance of developing the teaching skills of general education teachers if special education is to be effective. A list of papers and presentations by the author is appended. (DB)

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ED 442 217

Final Report

A History of Special Education in Nashville, Tennessee, 1940-1990

Sherman Dorn, University of South Florida

Principal Investigator

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Preface

This research began in an initial career award from the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs to study the history of special education in Nashville, Tennessee, from 1940 to 1990. Nashville seemed appropriate as a test case of the conventional wisdom that both advocacy and research have changed the practice of special education since World War II, as it has had both active parent advocacy groups and an active research program in special education since the early 1950s. The proposal included the following research questions:

1. How did advocacy for children with disabilities and research change the practice of special education after World War II in Nashville?
2. How having internal dynamics in schools shaped special education practices in Nashville since World War II?
3. How representative have Nashville's experiences been in the history of special education since World War II?

In the more than four years since the approval of the project, and through a job transfer from Vanderbilt University to the University of South Florida, I have conducted more than two dozen oral history interviews, researched materials in several archives in the Nashville area, and read several hundred newspaper articles from the 50 years in question. Because the archival materials were more extensive than I had anticipated when writing the proposal, I have focused on answering the first two questions and have delayed, for the moment, judging how representative Nashville's experiences have been.

The tentative conclusions from my work thus far are that both research and advocacy have been important most visibly in program development within the public school systems in Nashville, Tennessee. The influence of research and advocacy seems to have been strongest

when researchers and advocates have established pilot programs that public organizations in Tennessee could absorb with minimal immediate disruption to their routines. Notable is the fact that Nashville was a particularly entrepreneurial system with regard to special education before the 1970s. One would expect it to be relatively receptive to research (as it was, nominally). That it was less responsive to bigger, more intrusive programs suggests that the routines of school systems that limit change are more powerful than the capacity of "outside" efforts of advocacy and research to affect by themselves.

The influence of research and advocacy on specific pedagogy, both teaching methods and quality of teachers, is less clear than that on programs. The reasons for the more diffuse effect on teaching are more complicated but are rooted in the position of special education within school systems. To be blunt, special education (in any of the meanings of that phrase) has never been able to rely on a highly-trained group of educators and has, instead, always required working with existing teachers, both those with and without some specialized training in working with students with disabilities. Parents have pushed Nashville's public schools to create new programs for students with disabilities, and researchers have established model programs, but public school control over programs has meant that such programs had to draw on the resources of schoolteachers as a whole. Where teachers are skillful, programs are likely to be successful. This statement may seem obvious, but it has implications for policy—and particularly for the development of teacher skills—that the debate over research in special education tends to avoid. Good education requires skilled teachers; research can support the training of such teachers, but it cannot replace professional development in schools as a whole.

To read these conclusions as suggesting privatization of education (special or general) as the optimal solution would be to misconstrue the events described here. The piloting of

programs, both by research and by advocacy groups, was predicated on the assumption that local and state governments would eventually fund and control them. Private groups have not been separate from government in U.S. history but in fact have had an intimate relationship, including in Nashville.[1] The parent group that started a small school for children with developmental disabilities in the early 1950s was the local chapter of the state group that pushed Tennessee's government to fund classes for children with developmental disabilities. The parents then asked the local school system to take the program over once it could obtain state funding. Similarly, federally-funded researchers typically start research with the idea of inspiring public schools, not supplanting them. (Some programs, such as Nicholas Hobbs' Project Re-Ed, have explicitly included a commitment from local or state government for funding after the demonstration period.) The fact that the programs with the most long-term local "legacy" in the Nashville area instituted programs outside the ordinary school apparatus is not separable from the fact that their founders wanted eventual public funding and control of those programs.

In addition, private schools face the same problems in recruiting and retaining teachers as public schools. The general problems of quality teaching, including in special education programs, is one of working with the teachers already in the classroom. Special education, in Nashville and elsewhere, has merely been more notable for the visible burnout (though that has in part been an artifact of program growth after P.L. 94-142) and the desire to turn others (in the case of special education, general classroom teachers or paraprofessionals) into skilled teachers.[2]

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[1] See Theda Skocpol, "The Tocqueville Problem: Civic Engagement in American Democracy," Social Science History 21 (1997): 455-79. Skocpol's current project on civic society and membership groups, including the type of trans-local group that the Arc is an example of, has been in part a response to claims about the decline of civic society; see Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," Journal of Democracy 6 (1995): 65-79.

[2] Judith D. Singer, "Are Special Educators' Career Paths Special? Results from a 13-Year Longitudinal Study," Exceptional Children 59 (1993): 262-79.

For a variety of reasons, the vast majority of teachers has been, and is likely to continue to be, experienced classroom teachers with established habits.

The substance of the report that follows has two sections, one on program development and one on the consequences of a narrow view of teacher training. Substantial material comes from a paper presented at the 1999 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Those who have contributed to the research include not only U.S. Department of Education but Douglas Fuchs, the senior investigator and the person who helped orient me to the field of special education several years ago; the researchers, practitioners, and students with disabilities and their families who told me of their experiences in interviews; librarians and archivists in Nashville and elsewhere; and Bob Bain and Jim Carl, two fellow historians of education who provided thoughtful criticism of the papers I presented at academic meetings. The responsibility for factual accuracy and interpretation is my own, of course.

A few notes about the oral history interviews and the history of Nashville schools are in order. First, only some of the oral history interviews have the names of the interviewees in the notes. Early in the project, several interviewees were surprised that the transcripts showed their speaking informally and (as all of us do) ungrammatically. They asked for additional editing of the transcripts, and I have not finished that task. Thus I have not yet solicited permission from all interviewees to use their names. Second, what is currently the Metropolitan Nashville public school system used to be two systems, one that encompassed the city of Nashville and then one for the surrounding parts of Davidson County. In the early 1960s, voters in Nashville and the rest of Davidson County approved a metropolitan consolidation of Nashville and the county. Thus, discussions of events in the 1940s and 1950s refer to separate "city" and "county" school systems, while later events occur in the Metropolitan Nashville system.

Program Legacies of Advocacy and Research in Nashville Special Education

Reigning myths about the process of change in special education give privileged positions to the role of advocacy and research in influencing policy and practice.[3] The standard interpretation of the influence of advocacy on special education programs has been in the formulation of legal policy and the enforcement of that. One example in Tennessee was both the writing of the basic state special education law in 1972 which guaranteed education of individuals with disabilities and, then, when the state refused to budget enough money and start enforcement, a lawsuit one year later to require that the state follow through on its commitment.[4] The extent to which this influence has been true at the local level, however, is relatively unknown. Have parents of students with disabilities, or advocates, been able to influence the way schools treat students? More academic writers have been concerned with how research affects practice (or fails to). Correctly or not, many writers assume the importance of "knowledge creation" in changing practice in a relatively straightforward manner: researchers create and debate hypotheses about the nature of learning and effective interventions for students with disabilities and disseminate that information which filters into practice in an osmosis-like process. Questions about the gap between research and practice generally take that frame as a given and ask about the points between "research" and "practice" as the analytical focus. Even

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[3] For example, James M. Kauffman, "Introduction: Historical Trends and Contemporary Issues in Special Education in the United States," James M. Kauffman Daniel P. Hallahan, eds., Handbook of special education (1st ed.) (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1981).

[4] Chapter 839, Tenn. Public Acts 1972; Val Rainey et al. v. Tennessee Department of Education, Davidson County Chancery Court, Docket A-3100, originally filed November 6, 1973; see the broad consent decree filed July 19, 1974, in an order signed M.B. 90, p. 419 by Chancellor Frank Drowota.

some postmodernist critics of special education as a field put research knowledge in a privileged position for creating change.[5]

One of the reasons for the presumed importance of research has been relatively heavy federal investment in special education research for almost forty years. Together, the National Institutes for Health and the Department of Education (and its predecessor agencies) have spent millions of dollars on special education research. Special education has, in some ways, received more research support than other areas of educational research. In the 1999 fiscal year, for example, field-initiated research in all U.S. Department of Education programs totaled $26.8 million, but the vast majority, $22.8 million, went to researchers in special education (in programs of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services).[6] In all the programs together, the federal government in Washington underwrote the research and careers of dozens of special education faculty members during this past century. One who has been involved in this research can often point to specific instructional techniques developed through federal investment as well as broader perspectives on special education and disabilities.[7] The fact that schools use these techniques sporadically is a source of great frustration but not necessarily a reason to question the fundamental investment in basic and applied special education research.

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[5] David B. Malouf and Ellen P. Schiller, "Practice and Research in Special Education," Exceptional Children 61 (March-April 1995): 414-24; Ellen P. Schiller, "Research Utilization: A Federal Perspective," Remedial and Special Education 16 (November 1995): 372-75; James M. Kauffman, "Research to Practice Issues," Behavioral Disorders 22 (November 1996): 55-60; Doug Carnine, "Bridging the Research to Practice Gap," Exceptional Children 63 (Summer 1997): 513-21; Ann Kornblet, et al., "Response to Bridging the Research-to-Practice Gap," Exceptional Children 63 (Summer 1997): 523-34; Thomas M. Skrtic, Behind Special Education: A Critical Analysis of Professional Culture and School Organization (Denver: Love Pub. Co., 1991).

[6] U.S. Department of Education Award Database, available at http://ocfo.ed.gov/grntinfo/grntawd.htm

[7] Douglas and Lynn S. Fuchs, "Special Education—Ineffective? Immoral?" Exceptional Children 61 (1995): 303-5.

The recent debate that has opened within the field of special education about alleged epistemological and political flaws in educational research is beyond the scope of this report.[8] However, one can provide a different perspective on implementation of research starting with a criticism grounded in organizational theory: The assumption of straightforward dissemination and use of knowledge defies most of the mainstream literature on how schools as organizations function (or malfunction). For many reasons, schools have not been not been and are not empty vessels into which one can pour knowledge or policy. David Rogers and Seymour Sarason years ago described the potential for schools as organizations and sites of work culture to distort the potential educational purposes of school systems. In hierarchical organizations that concentrate power, they claimed, the needs of children (and the needs of teachers, to Sarason) would often have a marginal position in comparison to the need of adults to control their work and the work of others. Richard Weatherley explained, in a case study of the implementation of special education law in Massachusetts, that in the press to meet competing demands, none of which they could fulfill, educators interpreted legal requirements in ways that limited the demand on them. Weatherley and Michael Lipsky called this the function of street-level bureaucrats to implement what those higher in a vertical organization attempted to impose. Karl Weick proposed the term "loosely-coupled system" to describe the same phenomenon of demands that did not translate into practice. Teachers know this in phrases with less jargon: The power to close one's door is perhaps the greatest compensation for loneliness in teaching.[9]

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[8] Skrtic, Behind Special Education; Doug Biklen, "Communication Unbound: Autism and Praxis," Harvard Educational Review 60 (August 1990): 291-314; Scot Danforth, "On What Basis Hope? Modern Progress and Postmodern Possibilities," Mental Retardation 35 (April 1997): 93-106.

[9] David Rogers, 110 Livingston Street: Politics and Bureaucracy in the New York City Schools (New York: Random House, 1968); Seymour B. Sarason, The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1971); Richard Weatherley Reforming Special Education: Policy Implementation from State Level to Street Level (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1979); Richard Weatherley and Michael Lipsky, "Street Level Bureaucrats and

Historically, the organizational inertia in school systems has not been infinite. Schools do change and have changed in fundamental ways. One can point to the established processes embedded in federal special education law or the dramatic increase in Southern desegregation between 1967 and 1974 as examples of change that overwhelmed many institutional barriers. A more apt term for the power of schools as organizations would be the ability to set limits to change. Special education became a legal right, but not one that disrupted everyday school routines. Desegregation happened, but not until years after the Brown v. Board of Education rulings and not without cost either to Black students or educators at the frontiers of desegregation. Both internal organizational reasons and larger social beliefs have held the scope of possible change in check. By the post-World War II era, school administrators had become comfortable with professional autonomy they had acquired at the turn of the century and were willing to fight critics even while their prestige declined. In addition to the defensiveness of administrators, however, conservative social beliefs about schools practices prevent change that would dramatically alter the "grammar of schooling," or the way that common experiences of schools help the general population define what legitimate school practices are.[10]

One corollary of the limits school systems build against change is the limitation of the capacity of teachers to change schools from within. The explanations for that conservatism of teaching ranges from organizational and political demands to the feminization and deskilling of

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Institutional Innovation: Implementing Special Education Reform," Harvard Educational Review 47 (1977): 171-97; Karl Weick, "Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems," Administrative Science Quarterly 21 (March 1976): 1-19.

[10] Carol Christensen and Sherman Dorn, "Competing Notions of Social Justice and Contradictions in Special Education Reform," Journal of Special Education 31 (Summer 1997): 181-98; Larry Cuban, "Myths about Changing Schools and the Case of Special Education," Remedial and Special Education 17 (March 1996):75-82; Gary Orfield, The Reconstruction of Southern Education: The Schools and the 1964 Civil Rights Act (New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1969); David Tyack and Elisabeth Hansot, Managers of Virtue: Public School Leadership in America, 1820-1980 (New York: Basic Books, 1982); David Tyack and Larry Cuban, Tinkering toward Utopia: A Century of Public School Reform (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995).

teaching. Sarason and Cuban describe the limits of organizational and work culture. Cuban further describes competing political demands that often limit what teachers try in classroom changes, such as the "back to basics" political debate in the 1970s that strangled the limited open-classroom experiment that existed at the time. Apple, using Strober and Tyack's work on the feminization of teaching, argued that the gendered organization of work in school systems has led to the deprofesionalization of teaching and deliberate dumbing-down of classroom tasks in an effort to "teacher-proof" schools. Herbst focused not on classrooms but instead on the development of normal schools and teachers colleges: In trying to emulate research institutions, he argued, teacher training institutions moved away from a focus on practical, grounded advice for nascent teachers and opted instead for a theoretical focus that both failed to serve the needs of teachers and also could never gain legitimacy and parity with the more established (if newer) university disciplines of psychology and sociology.[11]

The history of special education in Nashville, Tennessee, from 1940 to 1990, provides several examples of specific piloted programs started by advocacy groups and researchers and thus a test of influence. One reason for examining Nashville's history was the combination of research and advocacy efforts in Tennessee, which had both parent advocacy organizations in the early 1950s (the predecessors to local Arc chapters today) and also university-based research from the early 1950s (largely at George Peabody College for Teachers). The federal government sponsored many applied research projects at Peabody over the years, and several have sufficient extant documentation or oral history participants related to the project to make some tentative

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[11] Sarason, The Culture of the School; Larry Cuban, How Teachers Taught: Constancy and Change in American Classrooms, 1880-1990 (2nd ed.) (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993); Michael W. Apple, Teachers and Texts: A Political Economy of Class and Gender Relations in Education (New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986); Myra H. Strober and David Tyack, "Why Do Women Teach and Men Manage? A Report on

judgments about their legacy in special education locally.[12] The local case is perhaps an acid test of the influence of advocacy and knowledge-dissemination: if parents and researchers develop specific projects, then the educators and local schools involved in or area of the project should be among those who are the first and most committed converts to the new program or perspective. I state this proposition in a deliberately naive fashion, after describing all the reasons why we should be skeptical of such a process, to make clear the value of studying local projects. Examining the variation among local legacies of applied research projects may allow us to develop some more sophisticated explanations of how research projects provide legacies—and fail to. What follows are sketches of several pilot projects in the Nashville area, started both by advocates and researchers, and their legacies.

Successful Long-Term Influences

The Edgehill School.[13] In the early 1950s, parents of students with developmental disabilities in Tennessee had very few options for where to send their children. The state of Tennessee did not support the education of students with moderate or severe disabilities, and even school systems like the Nashville city schools had classrooms for students with moderate mental retardation but not more involved disabilities. The newly formed Davidson County Council for Retarded Children decided to create, with the help of the Rotary Club, a school for many of these children called the Edgehill School. It began in the parish of a local Episcopal

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Research on Schools," Signs 5 (1980): 494-503; Jurgen Herbst, And Sadly Teach: Teacher Education and Professionalization in American Culture (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

[12] See Sherman Dorn, A Brief History of Peabody College (Nashville, Tenn.: Peabody College of Vanderbilt University, 1996), for the context of research, especially the Kennedy Center, and Peabody College.

[13] Details from this sketch come from the Nashville City Board of Education minutes, August 11, 1955; October 6, 1955; November 15, 1955; December 15, 1955; May 21, 1957; September 12, 1957; July 22, 1958; August 14, 1958; September 11, 1958; Davidson County Board of Education minutes, August 15, 1957; Nashville Banner, September 1, 1953; May 7, 1954; October 6, 1953; October 6, 1955.

Church of the Advent and later moved to a housing project. In late 1955, it was using a high school teacher who had no training in special education, and was supplemented by the efforts of parents (for example, the mother who drove the station wagon in which many children rode to and from the school, as well as supplies such as a record player and six dozen 78-rpm records). In 1955, the Tennessee state legislature, prompted by many parents around the state, crafted legislation that supported subsidies for classrooms for students with moderate disabilities. Local parents then convinced the Nashville city schools to take on what had been the Edgehill School and incorporate it into the regular school program. One parent explained her reaction as gratitude for the private and the later public schooling, both:

> I heard about a little class that was being started at Church of the Advent on Edgehill Avenue by a group of these same parents who had handicapped kids but who were in private schools throughout the country. And they were big-hearted enough to start something for those who couldn't afford to go to private schools. And so that is how Edgehill School started, the first class for trainable retarded children. And we were there for a year, [and] from there we moved to Vine Hill Project because the church needed their room for a Sunday School room. So we stayed there about a year and a half at Vine Hill Project and from there we moved to Buena Vista after we and some of the other people convinced Mr. Bass [the city superintendent] to accept our children into the city school system because there was no classes for the trainable retarded in the county schools. And the principal at that time would not even consider putting a class in. And so Mr. Bass was kind-hearted enough to start the class.[14]

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[14] Oral history interview, April 23, 1996.

There were some caveats to the city's public system taking over the program. Parents continued to subsidize the program in crucial ways, with a station wagon that the private program had acquired and with fundraising. The fact that parents supported and in fact initiated this program did not necessarily mean, even if they were grateful, that they were satisfied with it. A second mother remembered that she did not think the public school program for children with severe disabilities in the early 1960s was much more than warehousing the children:

> Q
>
> What did your son do during the day—
>
> A
>
> Just lay him down, put him on a pallet on the floor; it was mostly a babysitting thing, all day long. Didn't learn one thing. And they'd set them down with these blocks, wooden puzzles. He'd sit there and in two or three minutes he'd have that puzzle put together and then he'd be bored to death again. Well, that's—of course, that was the place for him, and to be with other kids, you know, and I was thankful to have it. . . Finally, he did get to go to Buena Vista (a school with ungraded or EMR classrooms), and it wasn't much better over there.[15]

Note the combination of both gratitude and also criticism. This mother understood what the school represented, and that she also had a feeling that there could be more offered.

On the other hand, parents did pilot a program and the school system absorb it. A few factors were important in the incorporation of the Edgehill School. First, the Nashville schools had, for more than a decade, been involved in expanding special education programs. In the late 1930s, the Nashville schools started what was then called a sight-saving class for students with

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[15] Oral history interview, November 14, 1995.

visual impairments (though not students who were completely blind).[16] In 1940, on the prompting of the superintendent, the Nashville schools had started ungraded classrooms, or what were later known as EMR classrooms.[17] The start of classrooms for students with more involved disabilities was an extension of this process and development of special education. As the Nashville city system's instruction committee noted, "This school project falls within the framework of the Nashville City Schools and fits into the general philosophy of the school program."[18] Creating a classroom for students with more severe disabilities was an extension of that process, and while the Nashville city schools were not willing, as a whole, to start up such a program without aid, once the state subsidized such a program, the city schools willingly accommodated it and proudly proclaimed their progressive nature in expanding this program.

However, not always did the Nashville city school system honor parents' requests about special education. In 1956, parents of blind children asked that the public school admit them into classrooms for children with residual vision. The schools refused, explaining that the Tennessee School for the Blind was local and the appropriate placement.[19] What was different in the case of the Edgehill School were five additional factors. First, the state was providing partial funding. Second, parents continued to subsidize the program. Third, unlike blind students, children with developmental disabilities had no other options for public schooling to which the schools could redirect them. Fourth, absorbing the Edgehill School would not disrupt the routines of schools (as would allowing blind children into classrooms where teachers might not want them); instead, it involved adding a program, a tactic which schools have been able to accommodate

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[16] Nashville City Board of Education minutes, May 30, 1938.

[17] Nashville City Board of Education minutes, October 28, 1940.

[18] Nashville City Board of Education minutes, October 6, 1955.

repeatedly.[20] Finally, these parents had already become adept at making political inroads at the state as well as local level, being privy to small discussions about the future of residential institutions as well as lobbying successfully for legislation.[21] The combination of pressure (from parents) and the ease of accommodation (from both a funding and organizational sense) made possible the absorption of what had been a private school.

Project Re-ED.[22] In the late 1950s, Peabody psychologist Nicholas Hobbs floated a proposal by staff members of the National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH) for a way to handle what he and NIMH expected would be a large cohort of children with behavior problems as part of the Baby Boom in the U.S. South, where trained psychologists and psychiatrists were scarce. The dominant treatment option at the time was a limited number of spaces for intensive psychiatric programming, often with psychotropic drugs and locked-down wards. This was neither appropriate for most children, in Hobbs' view, nor was it cheap or likely to be available to many children. Over the next several years, he recrafted his proposal until, in 1961, NIMH agreed to fund a demonstration project. The proposal explicitly combined financial and programmatic objectives:

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[19] Nashville City Board of Education minutes, July 5, 1956; January 8, 1957; March 14, 1957; April 16, 1957.

[20] See Tyack and Cuban, Tinkering toward Utopia.

[21] Two parents were at a private conference on state policy regarding severe mental retardation April 20, 1954; see agenda and notes in Tennessee State Library and Archives, Record Group 92, box 35.

[22] Sources for this sketch include the original application, Schools for the Re-education of Disturbed Children (NIMH award 5 R11 MH 00929-06); essay by Ken Herrell included in note from Evylin Harrell to Nell Wheeler, in Vanderbilt University Education Library, Project Re-ED Vertical Files, folder 16.31-B; Nicholas Hobbs, The Troubled and Troubling Child (San Franscisco: Jossey-Bass, 1982); Nicholas Hobbs, "Helping Disturbed Children: Psychological and Ecological Strategies," American Psychologist 21 (1966): 1105-1115; Nashville Tennessean, January 27, 1985; Nashville Banner, February 17, 1990; June 29, 1990; and interviews with former staff members in the demonstration project and Cumberland School and Crockett House, the adolescent facility.

> A school for the re-education of emotionally disturbed children would be a complementary facility that would: (1) help solve the manpower problem in the mental health fields, (2) demonstrate possible solutions to mental health problems by non-mental health personnel, (3) create a pattern for more effective use of highly trained psychiatrists, social workers, educators, and psychologists, (4) provide a buffer against hospitalization of children and a facility for speeding their recovery after hospitalization, and (5) provide a learning experience for disturbed children in a setting with less discontinuity from normal patterns of living in relationship with adults who are "natural" workers with children, able to help them learn in day-by-day living more wholesome ways of feeling and behaving.[23]

In the fall of 1962, two demonstration semi-residential schools opened, one in Nashville and the other in North Carolina. Children aged 6 to 12 whom professional staff judged to have normal academic abilities apart from behavioral issues spent weekdays in schooling and other activities and weeknights in small groups living in converted houses in a middle-class neighborhood in Nashville. On weekends, most of the children went home to their families. Project Re-ED was thus one of the first options anywhere in the South for children with behavior problems, who had generally flunked a grade or been expelled from school, that did not focus on psychiatry or psychotherapy. In the summers, the Re-ED students camped in the woods in the countryside outside Nashville where, according to one former student,

> We slept in tents in the woods about a half mile from camp headquarters. At camp headquarters there were buildings which include mess hall, recreation hall, the Whipporwill cabin, toolshed and garage and offices and also rooms for the helpers and

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[23] Nicholas Hobbs and William Rhodes, Schools for the Re-education of Disturbed Children, 2

> kitchen staff. Even though it may be surprising, they taught school there in the mornings. After school we went for a good swim in the Little Harpeth River. After that we had lunch, then we went back to our campsite and rested a little bit and learned camp crafts and improved our campsite.[24]

The results from the program, in terms of the students in the demonstration schools, were fairly impressive, with many of the children returning to their families and regular public schools within six to nine months of original admittance. Nationally, the two authors of the original proposal helped midwife a new theory of ecological personal development in the 1960s and 1970s. Hobbs' 1966 presidential speech to the American Psychological Association outlined the Re-ED program, twelve principles Hobbs thought were important, and the argument that manifestations of behavior problems were the result of an interaction between a person and her or his environment (or ecology) and not just internal deficits.[25]

Locally, the Project Re-ED demonstration school in Nashville had two long-term legacies. One was the encouragement of new programs for children with troubling behavior in the Nashville schools. Several teachers in Re-ED became the founding teachers in behavior classrooms in Nashville in the mid-1960s, and one, Billy Wayne Pyle, was a special education coordinator for the Nashville schools' headquarters for several years in the 1980s and early 1990s.[26] Thus, the training of people in a local demonstration project served as a resource on which the local schools founded a new program. (The issue of the quality of the program I am

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[24] Ken Harrell, untitled essay, March 1, 1966, in Vanderbilt University Education Library, Project Re-Ed Vertical Files, folder 16.31-B.

[25] Hobbs, "Helping Disturbed Children."

[26] Pyle was appointed a supervisor in 1967 and was later head of a local extension of Re-Ed, the federally-funded "Prevention-Intervention Project;" Metropolitan Nashville Board of Education minutes, May 9, 1967; February 22, 1972; June 24, 1975.

delaying until the second part of this report.) In addition to training those who taught in local schools, the local Re-ED school lasted mostly intact for more than a decade after federal funding ended. The Tennessee's Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation adopted the school at the end of the 1960s as part of its regional mental health programs in the mid-state region and added an adolescent program modeled after the younger children's school in the mid-1970s. State officials overseeing the regional programs protected both the elementary and adolescent Re-ED programs until the early 1980s.

The state programs deteriorated in the 1980s and became much more like psychiatric hospitalization for three reasons.[27] First, local schools had created the infrastructure to keep most children with milder behavioral problems at the local level by the early 1980s because of both state and federal laws guaranteeing special educational services for children with disabilities. Nashville's local public schools, for example, had not only a school for children with behavior problems but behavior-disorder classrooms in many school buildings throughout the system. Thus, the state, as the place of last resort, only handled children with relatively severe problems (something the first Re-ED students did not have, at least according to the entrance criterion established in the original proposal). Second, the state made a conscious decision in the 1980s to pursue federal Medicaid funding for the programs in response to the Reagan administration block grants and funding cutbacks in other social service areas. Since Medicaid funding required hospital certification, many of the unique features of the Re-ED program (a school environment, camping in the summer, and non-professional staffing in the

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[27] Cumberland, the program for younger children, retained much of its character through at least 1980, when one local newspaper article noted the building of a new playground: Nashville Tennessean, September 21, 1980. One of former Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander's aides, Nancy Rush, reported that Cumberland was still functioning as a semi-residential facility under the leadership of Alice Shannon, one of the original Re-Ed

evenings) became incompatible with how the state Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation funded the program. Camping, for example, became cost-prohibitive when hospital certification required nurses in attendance 24 hours a day. As one long-term teacher and administrator explained:

> A big part of the Cumberland House program, and at Crockett for a long time, too, was to do the outdoor education program where we took the kids on camping trips for two or three nights at a time and built team cohesiveness out in the woods. And that became very, very difficult to do in the late [19]80s because of the hospital standards were very restrictive on who could dispense medication. And if we didn't have a nurse to go with us on the trip to give whatever medication it was, even if it was drops for enuresis, we still had to have a nurse dispense it. So if you didn't have a nurse who could be there three shifts a day out in the woods, [or somebody else to do that for you], you couldn't go [and] it was difficult to plan these trips. We still tried. We still took trips into the woods and we'd take the kids into town to a mental health center and have their medical staff or hospital staff at a local hospital dispense medication but it became very difficult. The logistics became almost impossible. So we didn't do as many of those outdoor education trips as we would have liked to. And as we had to pare off some of the staff with staff reductions, then we would lose the outdoor education teacher. And we eventually lost the Art teacher, and some of those extra curricular staff who played a very important role in the overall program we lost because we had to pare down to the basic treatment team staff and other[s], medical—the other disciplines.[28]

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teachers, while 40% of Crockett's admissions were for 30-day evaluations for the juvenile court system. Undated handwritten notes, Tenenssee State Library and Archives, Lamar Alexander Papers, series 21, box 1007.

[28] Oral history interview, May 6, 1996.

Finally, state judges began using the programs as holding facilities for juvenile offenders in the mid-1980s, assigning offenders to the programs for "evaluation" purposes for up to 30 days. The state then turned the facilities into a full lock-down facility, precisely the type of program in reaction to which Hobbs had proposed Re-ED.

The legacy of Project Re-Ed is more mixed, even looking at the continuation and spread of programs, than that of the Edgehill School. On the one hand, Re-Ed both prompted program development in local public schools and also lasted as a separate program in the state Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation for many years. On the other hand, Cumberland House and Crockett Academy (the later adolescent program) lost many of the attributes earlier associated with Re-Ed. And a version of Re-Ed for the local schools started in 1972, the "Prevention-Intervention" project headed by former Re-Ed teacher Billy Wayne Pyle, ended after it lost federal funding in the mid-1970s. Once again, a program piloted outside the public schools had some influence in local schools where the local version started small (as a few rooms in Cavert School in the 1960s), had other forces encouraging it (in the case of behavior programs, perennial pressure from general classroom teachers to have some place to put extremely disruptive students), and was not disruptive of normal school routines (for schools in the 1960s commonly removed disruptive students from general education classrooms). Where the Re-Ed principles violated organizational needs—as in the state's desire to fund programs using Medicaid in later years or juvenile court judge's desire to place offenders somewhere—the principles lost out at the program level. And, as I will suggest in the second half, where Re-Ed principles violated school and classroom routines, the principles also lost out at the classroom level.

The Regional Intervention Program (RIP).[29] In 1970, Peabody faculty member John Ora received federal funding to start a program training parents to modify the behavior of their preschool children with either behavioral problems or developmental delays. The program was strict behavior modification and thus not exceptional for many special education projects at the time. Ora had apparently intended to model the program on the NASA modular management organization. The Regional Intervention Program (RIP) thus had separate units for intake evaluation, basic training (separate for children with different problems), child care for siblings, and evaluation of the program. In Nashville, the Regional Intervention Program was one of the first programs for the families of very young children, and their informational outreach to local pediatricians resulted in a demand that far exceeded the capacity of the original proposed project with paid staff.

How Ora responded to the sudden increase in demand, in the middle of a limited-budget federal project, set the structure of the program for the next 25 years. He refused to create a waiting list and, to staff the program without additional funds, required parents to "pay back" the time spent in the program after completion. As someone who worked at RIP in the early 1970s explained:

> There would be parents who were trained to do tours. There were parents who were trained to do the intakes and meet with parents initially. There were parents who took data on sessions in each of those different components. There were parents working in

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[29] Sources include John P. Ora, "Regional Intervention Project for Preschoolers and Parents: Final Report" (Nashville, Tenn.: George Peabody College for Teachers, July 1970), ED 043179 ; Phillip S. Strain, Peggy Steele, Toni Ellis, and Matthew A. Timm, "Long-Term Effects of Oppositional Child Treatment with Mothers as Therapists and Therapist Trainers Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis 15 (1982): 163-169; Matthew A. Timm, The Regional Intervention Program: Family Treatment by Family Members, *Behavioral Disorders* 19 (1993): 34-43; Nashville Banner, June 24, 1970; June 29, 1973; May 22, 1974; Nashville Tennessean, November 14, 1970; October 8, 1978; October 12, 1980; April 19, 1984; interview with two former staff members at RIP.

the classroom, the preschool classroom, the language classroom that I, which I was in and there were parents who, who ran this other little classroom called the playschool.[30]

Within a matter of months, parents did most of the work in intake, training, child care, and program evaluation. That minimal-cost structure, as well as the reputation among local pediatricians, led the state to adopt RIP when federal funding ended. The same state officials who protected the Re-ED programs in the 1970s also shepherded RIP through the middle 1990s, including expansion in similar projects around Middle Tennessee. With relatively little investment needed to start a program and serve very young children (at least until the late 1980s, when Tennessee began creating early childhood special education services), the state adopted and replicated the local project long after federal funding ended, through a period when RIP shifted away from strict behavior modification, and into the era when Tennessee began building up a statewide early childhood special education program.

The Regional Intervention Program lasted for 20 years in very much the same structure (and with some growth in other parts of Tennessee) entirely outside the local public schools. In part, that independence has come from the population served, preschoolers (though in recent years, federal special education law has required that public schools serve preschoolers). But RIP has also maintained a very unique, nonprofessionalized service structure, with parents conducting most of the work. The state has thus found it relatively inexpensive to operate.[31] One program change reported by a long-term permanent employee has been that the children

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[30] Oral history interview, July 10, 1996.

[31] One possible exception has been the introduction of managed care for state medical services, including mental health services, since the mid-1990s. One interviewee was concerned at an interview that the psychiatrists in charge of the behavioral plans would not understand the behaviorist approach, or that the accountants would not understand parent payback. But it has survived, and the state opened a new RIP center in Chattanooga recently; Chattanooga News Free-Press, October 2, 1998, retrieved from the Lexis-Nexus Academic Universe computer database.

served has shifted to being primarily children with behavior problems, since the public schools now serve preschoolers with developmental disabilities. A second has been a shift to evening programs, as more parents bringing children work during the day. This more recent change, as well as the focus on parents, makes RIP relatively incompatible with school routines, which rely on parents' giving up control of children to paid employees for the school day.

Influences without Clear Success

Natalie Barraga's Research on Limited Vision.[32] In 1964, Natalie Barraga's dissertation on the training of children with visual impairments to use residual vision signaled a sea change in accepted wisdom about children with limited vision. For many years, the dominant practice was to "conserve" sight, with the belief that using limited vision (for the majority of legally blind children have some residual vision) would cause it to deteriorate. Thus, the local Nashville schools started a "sight conservation" class in 1938, and teachers at the state school for years reluctantly forbade children who could read print from using print (and provided only Braille texts instead). In the early 1960s, Natalie Barraga used students at the Tennessee School for the Blind in a study to see whether training children to use residual vision eroded that ability or helped their performance. In both the original study and a replication (at the state school and in several state schools outside Tennessee), the children taught to use residual vision improved their performance on sight-related tasks. At about the same time, the ophthalmological view of limited vision also changed, from one stressing conservation to use. Thus, Barraga's study

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[32] Natalie Barraga, Increased Visual Behavior in Low Vision Children (New York: American Foundation for the Blind, 1964); Barraga, "Infusion of Research and Practice into Personnel Preparation," Peabody Journal of Education 67 (Winter 1990): 10-21; interviews with one former researcher in visual impairments, two former teachers at the Tennessee School for the Blind, and two former teachers in the Nashville public schools.

coincided with the "repeal of prohibition" on sight use from medical doctors.[33] The implications for teachers of children with limited sight were profound: they should teach children to use their sight, including specific techniques that today include the use of various aids (such as monocles and closed-circuit television devices) to read regularly-printed material and writing on classroom chalkboards.

Yet, at the local level (where Barraga conducted her study and her advisor conducted part of the replication), practices changed modestly. Former teachers at the Tennessee School for the Blind describe that they felt free to let students use print by the late 1960s, but they did not report specific reporting by Barraga to use sight, and they did not structure the classroom to encourage practice (such as using the classroom chalkboards at the school).

Q

At the end of the study, did Natalie Barraga tell you and the other teachers what had happened with the study?

A

No, I did not know except they had found--just in conversation, they had found practical results, very practical results.

Q

Then a few years later, did [Peabody professor] Sam Ashcroft do the same thing again?

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[33] The slogan was recalled in an oral history interview with a former Peabody faculty member, September 28, 1995.

A

No. I think by that time, we were actually doing more work in the school—by that time, not everybody was reading Braille. . . We had departed entirely from that policy that going to the School for the Blind just meant that you were going to learn Braille.

Q

What changed? Or why did the policy change?

A

Because we did not feel that is was necessary for people, [for] children who had residual vision enough to read Braille. [It was] not really necessary, and it was a waste of time for them to learn to read Braille unless they wanted to do it.

But actual classroom practice did not include the routines that would encourage the use of vision in everyday circumstances (such as using a blackboard):

Q

One other thing. If I had gone into a classroom in 1975, would I have seen teachers, observed teachers, using the blackboard for children with residential vision?

A

I doubt it. I doubt if their vision—she might have been, but probably most of the youngsters who had vision—she would have had to have one student up there at a time. Now, she might have been doing that. Their vision wouldn't have carried that far. Well, for instance, when I was teaching in Baltimore County, I had a boy in my third grade that would visually qualify for the School for the Blind. He was very intelligent. As long as I sat him up close enough so that he could read the board, he got along fine. But he couldn't sit back in the classroom and follow material on the chalkboard.

Q

So, when you were a supervisor at Tennessee School for the Blind, you did not observe teachers using black boards or other visual materials, apart from print books for individual students?

A

Yes, one of the first grade teachers was using the chalkboard some for some students that had much better vision. But primarily, no. Basically, when we started using print, instead of putting something on the chalkboard, we would have individual copies of it made. They'd run off something on the ditto machine. They would make the master copy and run them off so that each student had the written material, but it was there at their desk and not on the chalkboard.[34]

Two former teachers from the local Nashville schools also reported that Barraga's study did not directly change practices, but because the local public schools had changed classroom techniques before Barraga's research. They explained in a joint interview:

Q

[The] conventional wisdom that I've heard from a couple of places, is that … Natalie Barraga's dissertation in 1964 was one of the things that changed attitudes about working with children with limited sight. And what you're telling me ….

Teacher 1

It was before Natalie.

Q

That that attitude existed before ….

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[34] Oral history interview, June 25, 1997.

Teacher 2

Oh way before.

Teacher 1

Here, before Natalie because Natalie came here from Texas.

Teacher 2

Yeah, oh yeah. And even with people with Braille, we were taught . . . I don't know how you do that now, but we were taught to not to teach . . . You had to be careful teaching people with a little sight-Braille, because they have a tendency to read it wit their eyes instead of with the fingers and they become poor Braille readers instead of excellent Braille readers. . . .

Q

So was this attitude in Nashville about letting kids use their sight did that exist? Did Amie Dennison [another teacher of children with limited sight] agree with that and teach you that?

Teacher 2

Oh yeah.

Teacher 1

At least as early as 1960 that I can vouch for and you were before 1960.

Teacher 2

Yeah she certainly did and Peabody was at that—Peabody was like that too. . .[35]

Both of these stories, from the state school and from the local public schools, differ from the standard description of research dissemination. In one, a teacher reports that the researchers in

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[35] Oral history interview, May 29,1999.

two different studies on the same subject failed to conduct follow-up contacts with the staff members at a school. In another, two teachers remember that they knew the practical consequence of the research well before the research happened. What happened at the national level reflected at least the frustration which Barraga and other vision education researchers had encountered in trying to change practice. They decided by the late 1970s that they needed a different tactic to change teaching practices, and with federal funding conducted many conferences and wrote a textbook on teaching visual skills to blind students with residual vision.

Mainstream Assistance Teams.[36] In the mid-1980s, Peabody College researchers Douglas and Lynn Fuchs standardized a method of consulting with regular education teachers on behavior problems to increase the likelihood of intervention before referral to special education evaluation. Over the life of a federally-funded project conducted in the Nashville public schools, they devised a consultation manual for special education teachers and simple behavioral contracts general classroom teachers could use with children whose behavior they found troublesome. They trained several dozen special education teachers, and the results were impressive, both in terms of subjective ratings of behavior and also in the proportion of children later referred to formal special education evaluation. Three years after federal funding ended, they could not find a single teacher in the Nashville public schools using any of the manuals or training they received as part of the project.

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[36] Douglas Fuchs, Lynn S. Fuchs, and Michael W. Bahr, "Mainstream Assistance Teams: A Scientific Basis for the Art of Consultation," Exceptional Children 57 (October-November 1990): 128-39; Douglas Fuchs, Lynn S. Fuchs, Susan Gilman, and Peggy Reeder, "Prereferral Intervention through Teacher Consultation: Mainstream Assistance Teams," Academic Therapy 25 (January 1990): 263-76; Douglas and Lynn S. Fuchs, "Bridging the Research-to-Practice Gap with Mainstream Assistance Teams: A Cautionary Tale," School Psychology Quarterly 11 (Fall 1996): 244-66; Douglas and Lynn S. Fuchs, "Consultation as a Technology and the Politics of School Reform," Remedial and Special Education 17 (November 1996): 386-92; and informal discussions with Douglas Fuchs.

Piloting Programs Outside Schools

Out of the five projects described above, four of which were research projects with substantial empirical evidence supporting claims to effectiveness, three had institutional legacies while two had minimal direct impact on school practices after the end of federal funding. One common explanation of the research-to-practice gap, the paternalism of researchers and their alienation from real-life teaching, does not explain the variation here. The publications of all the projects described here show direction that was paternalistic in both the aim of the project (what children should be doing) and also the design (where university researchers decided the basic outlines of the project and the relationship with schools). On the other hand, several of the researchers in essence changed critical details in response to practical issues, for example with Ora's using parent labor to prevent a waiting list and the Fuchs' rewriting the consultation manual over the project to be simpler and with fewer intervention decisions needed by teachers. The attitude of researchers, whatever one may think about the projects' substance or design, does not easily explain the differences.

What is evident is that the three pilots with the longest institutional legacies both developed outside existing public schools. Three consequences flowed from these extrascholastic origins. First, the research projects were training individuals who were not already embedded in a work culture, and Re-ED and RIP could thus socialize staff (and parents, in RIP) to the specific structure and assumptions of the program. Projects in schools rely on teachers, principals, and other staff members who often have acquired habits and perspectives from working in schools that may not coincide with the perspectives of a project. Second, the pilots created new organizational structures with no preexisting (and potentially competing) purposes. Public schools do not have the education of children with disabilities as their primary

purpose, and many features of public schools work against the interventions (such as RIP) described here. Third, the pilots developed a constituency outside the confines of typical school politics. Parents of individuals with developmental disabilities lobbied for state funding and, eventually, local operation of programs for their children. Pediatricians became a very important referral source for RIP, and "alumni" parents of RIP have occasionally become paid staff members and have helped evaluate the program. Both Re-ED and RIP, at home in a state department, had some more powerful protectors than most small programs in local schools.

The issue here is not the inherent hostility of public schools towards change. In some ways, the creation of programs within schools, if possible, can provide more stability than for those outside schools. Re-ED is a case in point. The Nashville schools did create a behavior-disorder program shortly after the opening of Nashville's Re-ED program, in part by using those trained in Re-ED, and that program has continued to the present. (The quality of the behavior disorder program in Nashville is problematic in a variety of regards, as discussed in the second part, but the only precursor program found through this project was a "special adjustment room" that appeared in 1960 in the city schools but disappeared in 1963 so that the transitional board for the newly consolidated metropolitan school system could attempt "to alleviate overcrowding in regular classrooms and to adjust the budget so as to make funds available for free school lunches for children of indigent parents."[37]) Re-ED, in contrast, survived in the state's Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, but it became vulnerable to budget cuts and the programmatic consequences of hospital certification and juvenile court referrals. As Tyack and Cuban have noted, schools are willing to adopt reforms in incremental ways, and the

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[37] Nashville City Board of Education minutes, August 11, 1960; June 14, 1962; Metropolitan Nashville transitional Board of Education minutes, September 12, 1963, 193.

creation of special education programs fits within that pattern of reform adoption as an add-on to the regular school program.[38]

In addition, the varying legacies of these projects suggests that research in special education faces a barrier unrelated to the primary research and dissemination processes—or the supply of information. Schools do not focus on the needs of children with disabilities. Marginalized within school systems and educational politics, special education services exist as a generally tolerated part of schools but not as a central purpose. The reception and use of special education research depends on some incentive, personal or organizational, to use the knowledge, and the evolved position of special education within schools has tended to undermine institutional support for research use because of the low priority of students with disabilities within schools. Some schools and systems adopt specific research methods because key individuals are convinced in their use and are adept enough at encouraging adoption by teachers. But that adoption is an inherently idiosyncratic process.

Finally, these stories suggest an inherent conflict between the organizational needs of "systems change" and professional development approaches to educational reform. The systems change approach, discussed intensively over the past decade and implemented in different ways, such as in site-based management, starts from the position that incremental change is insufficient to improve education without wholesale reform of the organizational structure of schools. Professional development assumes that the most important lever for change is teacher knowledge. However, the history of professional development in the context of research (as described above) suggests that specialized training (in extrascholastic organizations) may be a more powerful method of training for long-term legacies than more generalized professional

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[38] Tyack and Cuban, Tinkering toward Utopia.

development with teachers' remaining embedded within schools. The reasons for this are both psychological and historical. Teachers may be more willing to adopt the perspective of a new methodology if they feel a part of a select group that is cohesive and can serve as a support network. (Applied researchers in schools have mimicked this support network typically with the use of research assistants to provide technical assistance and check on the faithfulness of teachers' use of a method. That type of intensive infrastructure is difficult to maintain with normal school funding levels and priorities.) Historically, school systems in the United States have developed to implement broad objectives that attempt to accomplish competing goals. The consequence at the school level is not only that teachers feel pulled in different directions but that no school is likely to have a faculty who agrees on educational priorities. Thus, teaching has been an historically constructed lonely profession, and professional development in a general context is unlikely to resolve the problems inherent in the way schools have developed in the United States.

Perhaps a larger lesson of this history is that, in order to influence practice, public schools must be more permeable and must have more open boundaries that allow for piloting of programs that can eventually take hold. This permeability is something that is not typically in the minds of public educators, no matter how much they speak to the desire for research to influence education, but it must be. The alternative is for the primary way to influence school system to be in market-based reforms such as vouchers and other routes to privatization. Fortunately, special education has a history of permeability that should provide a broader perspective. Even if one may not be satisfied with the relationships between public schools and what, for what better term, one may call outside agencies, that relationship is there and it has persisted much longer than the general permeability that may have existed in the 19th century.

Historians typically talk about a much fuzzier divide between public and private spheres in the 19th century, not only in schools but also in other areas of life. For example, the primary agencies that sued working-class parents for child neglect and abuse in the late 19th century were not public agencies but private organizations such as the society for the prevention of cruelty to children.[39] This standard story of the creation of public school systems as we know it has been the slow solidification of a line between public and private.

But that story is not necessarily true in special education. First are the examples of programs begun by private groups and then later taken over by public school systems (by local schools or by state agencies), such as the Edgehill School, the project Re-Ed schools, and RIP. Second is the history of the state schools throughout the country, which, no matter how critical one may legitimately be of them, has been one of a complex reciprocal relationship with local public schools. The Tennessee School for the Blind served as an academic preparatory institution for many years for blind students, especially those from rural counties without services.[40] But students in Nashville could, essentially, choose for many years between the state school and local services. That relationship changed but did not end with the state mandatory education law. Some former students as well as the faculty certainly perceived that the law threatened what they had known as the school, and the state school's alumni association fought a losing battle against the 1972 state law requirement that priority in the state school be for children with multiple disabilities.[41] However, the state school survived, though it now serves a

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[39] Michael B. Katz, In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America (New York: Basic Books, 1986), 108-9. For a brief explanation regarding schools, see Carl F. Kaestle, Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1860 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 166-67.

[40] John H. Waddey, Tennessee School for the Blind, 1844-1994: The First 150 Years (Nashville, Tenn.: Tennessee School for the Blind, 1995).

[41] See February 1975 petition filed against the Val Rainey decree by Hal Hardin on behalf of eighteen parents of children with visual impairments; an oral history interview with a former leader of the Alumni

high proportion of students with multiple disabilities. Blind students with high academic skills generally graduate today from local public schools.

The third arena of public-private relationships, especially since the establishment of federal special education law, has been the private schools that have begun and survived, in essence, as contractual agencies for the local public schools. This fact has been true in Nashville as well as nationally. The most visible private special education schools have been those that have taken on boarding students, and some private schools for many years survived on a tuition basis. However, far more common today are schools that are local in nature and have their clientele primarily from local public schools. In 1970-71, the state directory of approved non-public elementary and secondary schools only included one special education school in the Nashville area, St. Bernard Academy, an ungraded elementary school. The 1973-74 directory included four private schools as well as the two state Re-Ed schools. The 1977-78 directory included six private schools. Several of these private schools, plus others not mentioned in the state directory (such as Duncanwood Day Care), received contracts through either the local public schools or through a state agency. In 1975, for example, the local public school system anticipated serving over 11,000 students in special education and contracting out services for 56; the next year, the system planned to contract out services for 87 children.[42] The state Department of Human Services in 1977 contracted out day care services for 151 children and

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Association, April 18, 1997, confirmed that the association had paid for the legal battle. Also see plaintiffs' response in January 1978. Chancellor Ben Cantrell effectively ended the legal fight to protect the state school in two decrees in August and September 1978, in which he declared that parents of blind children could not choose between local public schools and the state school and in which he said that state school procedures were subject to due process hearings.

[42] Metropolitan Nashville Board of Education agenda, August 12, 1975; August 10, 1976. One set of contracts approved by the board September 9, 1975, were for a blanket authorization for 25-30 children at $88,595 total (or a minimum of approximately $3,000 per child).

adults in Middle Tennessee, probably mostly children, at six local agencies.[43] More recently, contracted services have expanded. In 1990, the Metropolitan Nashville schools approved outside special education contracts for $3.5 million, including 11 specific agencies, open authorizations for itinerant service providers (such as occupational therapists), and four blanket authorizations for different purposes (medical diagnoses, transportation, miscellaneous services, and "potential contracts").[44] The public-private relationship in Nashville has grown, at least in terms of sheer money expended and the number of students so served, since the early 1970s.

We need to pay better attention to the constellation of organizations and systems that have, historically, served children and young adults with disabilities. The fact that special education has included this permeable boundary to the present, suggests that one need not go through privatization in order to influence public schools. How one may do this is beyond the scope of this project, but the fact that the history exists should be an important perspective on the question of changing practices. One troubling pattern in this history of permeable boundaries in Nashville's special education has been the limiting of influence of both research and advocacy to program developments that have been easy to absorb and that have had substantial backing from outside the public schools. In a metropolitan area with early, forceful advocacy and early, active research programs, the local public schools have lost what had been, after World War II, the most expansive special education program in the state and one of the most entrepreneurial ones

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[43] I am estimating that most of the individuals involved are children because of the agencies represented: Donelson Child Development Center, Duncanwood Day Care Center and School for Retarded Children, Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children and Adults, Mur-Ci Home (which had served children with developmental disabilities for many years), Outlook Nashville (explicitly labeled as after school care), and Walden House, which also served as a contracting agency for children with behavior problems for the local public schools. The sheets including this information were between two other documents dated 1977. See "Contract Agencies Specifically for Handicapped Children," in Tennessee State Library and Archives, Record Group 75 (Halbert Harvill Papers), box 2.

[44] Metropolitan Nashville Board of Education minutes, August 14, 1990.

in the Southeast. That loss of leadership is, considering the local resources, both surprising and sad.

"Knows How To Do More:" The Dilemmas of Expectations in Special Education

In 1957, the Davidson County Council for Retarded Children (in Nashville), and its state organization, the Tennessee Association for Retarded Children, were stymied by one school system in its request for a "severely mentally retarded" classroom. Two years before, the state legislature had acceded to requests for state subsidies of local programs, separate from the state's support of other educational programs (including other special education).[45] Davidson County's school system (which was not, before the 1960s merger of Nashville and the county government, the same as the Nashville city schools) decided to refuse the request of parents to operate a classroom by itself.[46] The parents responded with a barrage of publicity. Clyde Nash, a parent of a child with developmental disabilities and president of the state group, explained the need for education: "When a trainable child becomes 15 years old, he will reach a maximum IQ, that of a child 7½ years old. And certainly a child 7½ years old knows how to do more than just dress himself."[47] Nash was arguing that the low expectations for the children in question were inappropriate. In addition, he was using the mental-age description of individuals with developmental disabilities, commonly used at the time to describe limits to development, to turn the tables and prescribe a minimum expectation for what schools should teach.[48] The parents

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[45] Chap. 33, Tenn. Public Acts, 1955.

[46] Davidson County Board of Education minutes, May 23, 1957.

[47] Nashville Tennessean, May 28, 1957. For other articles about the controversy, see the Nashville Tennesseean, May 24, May 31, June 6, June 7, and June 14, 1957; Nashville Banner, May 24, May 28, May 29, June 1, and June 7, 1957. The Tennesse Association for Retarded Children also published a special issue of its newsletter (vol. 2, no. 11) on May 31, including a pamphlet picturing a young girl with the caption "What Crime Has This Child Committed?"

[48] One parent described the pessimistic view of a pediatric specialist at Vanderbilt University, Virginia Kirk, in the late 1960s, as follows: "From Dr. Virginia Kirk it [the prognosis] was not encouraging. She didn't think he would ever learn to read or write. But he certainly did" (oral history interview, December 7, 1995). This memory is consonant with one other parents' recollection of Kirk's pessimism.

won this particular battle, pressuring the county schools to back down and offer a program, however tentatively, for children with developmental disabilities.[49]

In many ways, the arguments over special education in the past half-century—over mandatory education, the status of residential institutions, the degree of integration with nondisabled peers, and discipline issues—have similarly been about expectations and what students, teachers, or schools should "know how to do more." The great irony of the history of special education since World War II is that, while advocates and researchers have been successful in arguing that public schools could educate students with disabilities, and while expectations have changed for students, that change has been institutionalized in terms of programs for students rather than program quality. Those programs, by themselves, have not necessarily changed expectations for teaching or for teacher professional development, at least insofar as one crucial ingredients to training of teachers has been.[50] One example from Nashville's history is instructive: the programs available for children with troubling behavior. Project Re-Ed helped create the behavior-disorder program in Nashville; while such a program would eventually have happened, the local public schools in the mid-1960s borrowed from the expertise of faculty and trained teachers to create a program at one school (Cavert) that expanded, not only in one school but across the system. But with that expansion came deterioration in quality. In the mid-1970s, one oral history interviewee reported, Cavert School became filled with only troubled students, as others moved elsewhere (in part with the opening of a school for children with multiple or severe disabilities). According to a former Peabody

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[49] At the June 6 meeting, the board took the request under advisement. In the summer, the board asked its staff to open a class while studying the issue. One year later, the board approved the admittance of nine more students into the program, effectively making it permanent. Davidson County Board of Education minutes, June 6 and August 15, 1957; August 28, 1958.

College faculty member, the program at a school for children with behavior problems became worse over the course of several years:

> Within probably five or six years, that building was full of kids with BD or BD/LD a combination.
>
> Q
>
> What happened to the program as it grew?
>
> A
>
> It got worse. Yes. I hate to say that, but it's true. Now, we tried real hard. I had a couple of projects that we were working directly with Cavert School. They had some really good teachers over there but they had some really bad ones as well. And the principal who was really a lovely person tried hard to accommodate everybody, whether they were good or bad or indifferent. She was just one of those really sweet people. And so in the program there were bright spots, and I think probably in most programs there are bright spots, but overall it was fairly dismal.[51]

Two studies of teacher-student interactions in behavior-disorder classrooms in Nashville, reported more than 10 years apart (early 1980s and mid-1990s), indicate that such teachers praise student behavior very little.[52]

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[50] I do not discuss here the question of general expectations of school systems as organizations; see Christensen and Dorn, "Competing Notions of Social Justice and Contradictions in Special Education Reform."

[51] Oral history interview, June 11, 1996.

[52] Robert A. Gable and Richard E. Shores, "A Comparison of Teacher Approval and Disapproval Statements across Categories of Exceptionality," Journal of Special Education Technology 6, 1 (Winter 1983): 15-22, included material from the Nashville schools. Joseph H. Wehby has reported on his observations of Nashville behavior-disorder teachers in several forums, including a brown bag lunch in Vanderbilt University's Department of Special Education in the 1995-96 school year.

This result—consistent program quantity without a consistent quality of instruction—was not the intention of advocates, researchers, and educators who spent years working in special education. Much of the literature on teacher quality and professionalism that applies to general classroom teachers is also appropriate here: a public school career pays too little to attract and retain good teachers; the status and condition of teaching is poor; few incentives for good teaching are both powerful to change behavior and also ethical and fair to teachers; and the culture of schools vitiates against teacher professionalism.[53] Untangling the whole mess is beyond the scope of this project. However, apart from the general condition of teaching, dynamics exist which one can observe at the local level and which can provide perspective on instructional quality. The crux of the argument that follows is that program issues have captured most of the momentum for the improvement of education for individuals with disabilities. The dominant public policy debates over the past three decades have been about broad program issues: how many children can be served, where can they be served, and how easily can we expel children for misbehavior?[54] In part, creating programs is easier than improving the nuts and bolts of instruction. As documented in the first part of this report, schools find adding a program relatively easy compared to changing the habitual routines of schools. In addition, schools and outsiders can negotiate over the concrete details of a program in a way that is almost impossible with classroom instruction. The consent order in the Val Rainey case over implementation of the Tennessee special education state law, for example, describes concrete actions that the state government had to take; these actions were open to monitoring in ways that

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[53] For example, see Sarason, The Culture of the School; Cuban, How Teachers Taught.

[54] Consistent efforts by general education administrators to enable freer suspension and expulsion policies since the passage of the 1997 amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act confirms this capturing of issues at the program level. The amendments require behavioral plans where appropriate in each IEP, but focusing on the presence or success of those plans would require examination of instructional practices.

classroom instruction is not, in practice. Families and schools have often argued, in retrospect, about the quality of instruction once a case has gone to court, and the quality of efforts made to accommodate a child in a general education classroom is one of the questions which courts use for determining the least restrictive environment.[55] However, one cannot easily agree beforehand on an enforcement statement about instructional quality.[56]

Missing in the no-man's-land of public debate about special education has been a sophisticated policy discussion of teaching quality in special education programs. Special education does have debates about teacher preparation, and federal law requires that each state have a comprehensive system of professional development, but once again broad, quantifiable program issues have captured most attention. The continuing assumption in special education since the transition to a federal regime of special education law has been the primacy of the shortage of teachers for special education.[57] This assumption has both fiscal and programmatic consequences. In the 1999 fiscal year, for example, the federal government contracted with 177 personnel training programs (generally university-based) for $32.5 million.[58] The majority of this money, $23.4 million, went for pre-service training or the training of low-incidence

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[55] Mitchell L. Yell, "Least Restrictive Environment, Inclusion, and Students with Disabilities: A Legal Analysis," Journal of Special Education 28 (1995): 389-404.

[56] In practice, parents can, if dissatisfied with instructional quality or the program, call for additional IEP meetings, and one parent advocate in Tennessee suggested to me that the anticipation of additional IEP meetings and the accompanying logistics would be sufficient to put pressure on teachers to improve.

[57] Mary T. Brownell and Stephen W. Smith, " Attrition/Retention of Special Education Teachers: Critique of Current Research and Recommendations for Retention Efforts," Teacher Education and Special Education 15 (1992): 229-48; Singer, "Are Special Educators' Career Paths Special?;" Mary T. Brownell, Stephen W. Smith, Janet R. McNellis, and M. David Miller, "Attrition in Special Education: Why Teachers Leave the Classroom and Where They Go," Exceptionality 7 (1997): 143-55; Lech Wisniewski and Richard M. Gargiulo, "Occupational Stress and Burnout among Special Educators: A Review of the Literature," Journal of Special Education 31 (1997): 325-46.

[58] Search on the U.S. Department of Education Grant Award Database (http://web99.ed.gov/grant/grtawd99.nsf) using "personnel trng" and excluding parent-training programs (CFDA 029M and 029R).

specialists.[59] This program approach leaves untouched the vast majority of those in daily contact with students with disabilities: experienced teachers of children with high-incidence disabilities and general classroom teachers.

This disconnection between the dominant training efforts and the majority of practicing teachers has little basis in the history of special education. Historically, special education has never been able to rely on preexisting specialists. Special education has involved dramatic expansion without, necessarily, an expansion in the number of teachers available with pre-existing special training. This has been true not only in Nashville but also in other parts of the country and at other times. For example, J. E. Wallace Wallin, who organized special education programs in several cities across the country in the early part of the century, made explicit attempts to improve the training of general education teachers who had been assigned to special education programs. His detailed notes on the qualifications and course taking of special education teachers in Wilmington, Delaware, in the 1930s are particularly instructive. Annie J. Murdah, at the Elbert School in Wilmington, appears to be a classic case of successful upgrading of training, at least according to Wallin's model of further coursework for teachers. In 1932, Wallin noted that she had a 2-year normal school diploma, 15 years' experience in various grades and 1 year's experience in a "mentally deficient" class. Over the next eight years, Murdah earned credits from both Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania, enough to satisfy rules for Wilmington special education teachers which Wallin had convinced the local board of

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[59] CFDA 029A is for low-incidence personnel ($9,894,547) and 029G for pre-service personnel ($7,355,833). CFDA 029E, for training of personnel from minority ethnic and racial backgrounds ($6,148,856), may have included other types of programs, but I am assuming most was for undergraduate training. The other programs were for "leadership personnel" and "special studies" programs.

education to institute.[60] Edna O'Brien was, perhaps, more typical in partial fulfillment of Wallin's expectations. She received her teacher certificate from New Jersey State Teachers College and, before 1935, earned 8 credit hours at Columbia University (Teachers College) in junior high school and general curriculum courses. After beginning to teach special education, however, she began taking courses at the University of Delaware, Rutgers University, and Temple University in "mental hygiene," "The Mentally Deficient Child," and speech correction. She had, Wallin noted in 1940, "secured 10 of the required 18 credits in the field of Special Education."[61] Sara Caney represented failure, to Wallin. He noted, in 1935, that "she has not presented any credits which in my judgment should be accredited for special class work" and "should not be given any special education certificate but should be transferred away from the special class in accordance with the recommendation which I made in my last annual report." The next year, he noted with her failure to take additional coursework, "I believe her reason for not pursuing the courses is that she wants to return to a regular grade and is using as an argument in favor of such transfer the fact that she has very little training for special class work."[62]

Similarly, in Nashville special education programs relied on general education teachers. Several documents suggest the extent to which this is true across several decades. In the 1940s, descriptions of the hiring of special education teachers, in what was then considered "ungraded" classrooms, often noted not the hiring of teachers but the transfer of teachers from general education classrooms to the ungraded classrooms. In July 1947, for example, the Nashville city schools appointed three teachers directly to ungraded rooms but transferred six teachers from

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[60] Wallin, September 21, 1932, and February 20, 1940, notes on Murdah, in box M1415, J. E. Wallace Wallin Papers, University of Akron, History of Psychology Archives.

[61] Wallin, March 12, 1940, note on O'Brien, in box M1415, Wallin Papers.

[62] Wallin, March 4, 1935, and June 23, 1936, notes on Caney, in box M1415, Wallin Papers.

graded rooms to ungraded ones.[63] But those attempts to turn general classroom teachers into special education did not always succeed. A month later, one of the new appointees was back in front of the board, and the minutes record: "Assigned Kathryn Millspaugh to Buena Vista as teacher of sixth grade, instead of ungraded room work. Miss Millspaugh requested that she not be assigned ungraded room work."[64] But another teacher transferred to special education remained there for more than twenty years:

> I was teaching in a situation that I wanted to get out of and I talked to Mr. Bass, who was the school superintendent at the time. He referred me to Dr. Willis who was the elementary supervisor, and Dr. Willis said they wanted to start a special education program for retarded children at Howard School. There was no class there at that time. And Dr. Willis gave me an outline of courses that he would like for me to take in preparation for starting this project, but I was to start without my courses. I took them along as I taught. . . . They had given me free run of deciding how we were going to set up this special education department. I wasn't qualified but they gave it to me anyway.[65]

This teacher's description of being recruited into special education and then being asked to take courses in the field while teaching was not unusual at the time. In the 1950s, as the state of Tennessee started to institute certification requirements for special education teachers and to encourage slightly higher payment for those teachers, the Nashville city and Davidson County

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[63] Nashville city Board of Education minutes, July 7, 1947.

[64] Nashville city Board of Education minutes, August 4, 1947, 334. Millspaugh's refusal to teach students with disabilities was apparently deeply-rooted. She was the regular school principal, many years later, whom one former student and her mother, Sara and Suzanne Ezell, reported as extremely hostile to Sara Ezell's needs as a student who used a wheelchair; oral history interview, February 6, 1996.

[65] Oral history interview, July 4, 1996.

public school systems encouraged the new special education teachers to take courses in at least a few subjects to qualify them for certification, often at Peabody College.[66]

This resorting to teachers trained for the general classroom continued through the late 1960s. As the Nashville Davidson County school system (now consolidated) expanded special education with larger tax receipts in the state of Tennessee as well as the influx of federal funds from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the new classrooms did not become the domain of teachers who had become specialized. Instead, the teachers of new special education program classrooms in elementary schools were, by and large, those with elementary certification who had been selected for this new role. In 1966, 54 percent of teachers (27 of 50) in elementary EMR (educable mentally retarded) classrooms in the Metropolitan Nashville school system had certification in special education. While in the next four years, the system slightly increased the proportion of certified teachers in EMR rooms to 61 percent (52 of 86) during expansion, the new programs in learning disabilities, varying exceptionalities, and resource rooms relied on borrowed talent: Only 3 out of the 42 teachers in these three new programs in elementary schools, or 7 percent, had specialized training. The most common field was elementary education, but some special educators had odd out-of-field training. For example, one EMR teacher in the Burton elementary school had training in "bookkeeping, shorthand, typing, business math, English, and business law." One resource teacher in the Warner elementary school was a specialist in "business law, elem. econ, typing." In the Cavert school, which had only special education classes, 9 of the 19 classroom teachers had no special

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[66] Chapter 70, Tenn. Public Acts, 1953, authorized the state to set qualifications for special education teachers. A former Peabody College faculty member said he and his colleagues described these recruits at the time as "retreads," though in retrospect he said he had misjudged them; oral history interview, February 9, 1996.

education certification.[67]

One should not be surprised at this consistent pattern. Long before the federal education laws made the turnover and shortages of special education teachers issues that people discussed widely, special education teachers were always in short supply. In education, too, whether in special classrooms or general education classrooms, trained teachers have not always been in prolific supply. Since the establishment of federal special education law, much discussion has focused on teacher shortages in special education and the need for professional training. One part of the federal law, the requirement for each state to have a comprehensive system for professional development, is supposed to take care of the needs of specialized training. In some instances, this need focuses on teachers of students with conditions that are of low incidence such as visual impairments or multiple disabilities. In some cases, the focus has been on upgrading standards, such as requiring individuals in speech and language services to have to state licensing in order to practice in public schools. However, the focus on post P. L. 94-142 teacher shortages has prevented us from taking a long-term perspective and looking at the history of teaching, the teaching force, and special education as a guide to teach shortages today and in the future. With that perspective, one must note the continuity, relatively speaking, of teacher shortages and the need to use general education teachers in staffing special education.

One may note, correctly, the current irony in the debate over inclusion and who should teach students with disabilities. Historically, generalists (not specialists) have, and the question has always had to be about training those with knowledge of general classroom techniques to work with students with disabilities. This perspective should provide some solace for those who

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[67] Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, "Preliminary Reports for Schools, 1966-67," Tennessee State Library and Archives, Record Group 51, reels 72-73; and "Preliminary Reports for Schools, 1970-71," Tennessee

are attempting to teach and train general education teachers to be more tolerant and skillful when students with disabilities are in general education classrooms. Two examples of research from the Nashville area and special education should suffice to illustrate how the issues connect. In the 1960s, special education researcher Lloyd Dunn began a very large, multi-year project based at Peabody in which he hoped to use an unorthodox alphabet, the Initial Teaching Alphabet, plus some other specialized techniques, such as the use of the Peabody Language Development Kit, in order to enhance the teaching of reading and writing for poor students. Dunn created a pilot program in several schools which seemed, at first glance, to be quite successful in teaching poor students how to read relatively well. In the late 1960s, Dunn decided to expand this project and to see how well a demonstration project could work in regular classrooms, with teachers who had not been so carefully selected and, quite importantly, self selected. The results of this expansion of the demonstration project shows the limitations of what he had hoped to do. In the final project report, Dunn (along with his graduate students) explained that the expanded project had not worked very well. They noted, in the conclusion, that the skills of general education classroom teachers, especially in schools with high proportions of poor students, were not as skilled nor had the necessary skills to carry out the program successfully.[68]

State Library and Archives, Record Group 51, reel 85. These were reports to the state shortly after the start of school documenting the assignments and certification of every teacher in every school.

[68] See Lloyd M. Dunn and Max. W. Mueller, The Effectiveness of the Peabody Language Development Kits and the Initial Teaching Alphabet with Disadvantaged Children in the Primary Grades: After One Year, Institute on Mental Retardation and Intellectual Development (IMRID) Behavioral Science Monograph No. 2 (Nashville, Tenn. : George Peabody College for Teachers, 1967); Dunn, Donald Neville, Carolyn Bailey, Prayot Pochanart, and Philip Pfost, The Effectiveness of Three Reading Approaches and an Oral Language Stimulation Program with Disadvantaged Children in the Primary Grades: An Interim Report after One Year of the Cooperative Reading Project, IMRID Behavioral Science Monograph No. 7 (Nashville, Tenn. : George Peabody College for Teachers, 1967); Dunn, Pochanart, Pfost, and Robert H. Bruininks, The Effectiveness of the Peabody Language Development Kits and the Initial Teaching Alphabet with Disadvantaged Children in the Primary Grades; A Report after the Third Grade of the Cooperative Language Development Project, IMRID Behavioral Science Monograph No. 9 (Nashville, Tenn. : George Peabody College for Teachers, 1968); Dunn, Neville, Pfost, Pochanart, and Bruininks, The Effectiveness of Three Reading Approaches and an Oral Language Stimulation Program with Disadvantaged Children in the Primary Grades: A Final Report after Two Years of the Cooperative Reading Project

In the 1990s, Peabody special education researchers Doug and Lynn Fuchs tested ways for general education teachers to teach more effectively to students with disabilities or at risk of becoming labeled disabled. Several of the projects included transition programming from resource rooms back to general education classroom or a combination of curriculum-based measurement and classwide peer tutoring, now called peer assisted learning strategies. Again, while the results of those programs suggested the strength of those techniques for improving the education of students with disabilities and reducing the chances that some students at risk of falling behind would do so compared to standard general education classroom practices, the results certainly were not something that would justify placing all children with learning disabilities in general education classroom. This conclusion the Fuchs have repeated in many places and in many different circumstances: no panacea exists for children with high-incidence learning problems.[69] In recent articles, the Fuchs have pointed to the culture of schools and school reform patterns as responsible in many ways for the difficulty in disseminating research-based knowledge as well as maintaining specific programs such as the Mainstream Assistance

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IMRID Behavioral Science Monograph No. 10 (Nashville, Tenn. : George Peabody College for Teachers, 1968); oral history interview with a former graduate student of Dunn's, August 14, 1997.

[69] For materials on reintegration, see Douglas Fuchs, Lynn S. Fuchs, Pamela Fernstrom, and Michael Hohn, "Toward a Responsible Reintegration of Behaviorally Disordered Students," Behavior Disorders 16 (1991): 133-47; Douglas Fuchs, Lynn S. Fuchs, and Pamela Fernstrom, "Case-by-case Reintegration of Students with Learning Disabilities," Elementary School Journal 92 (1992): 261-81; Douglas Fuchs, P. Holley Roberts, Lynn S. Fuchs, and Judith Bowers, "Reintegrating Students with Learning Disabilities into the Mainstream: A Two-Year Study," Learning Disabilities Research and Practice 11 (1996): 214-29; for peer-assisted learning strategies, see Norris B. Phillips, Carol L. Hamlett, Lynn S. Fuchs, and Douglas Fuchs, Combining Classwide Curriculum-Based Measurement and Peer Tutoring To Help General Educators Provide Adaptive Education," Learning Disabilities Research and Practice 8 (1993): 148-56; Lynn S. Fuchs, Douglas Fuchs, Norris B. Phillips, and Carol L. Hamlett, "Acquisition and Transfer Effects of Classwide Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies in Mathematics for Students with Varying Learning Histories," School Psychology Review 24 (1995): 602-20; Deborah C. Simmons, Lynn S. Fuchs, Douglas Fuchs, and Patricia Mathes, "Effects of Explicit Teaching and Peer Tutoring on the Reading Achievement of Learning-Disabled and Low-Performing Students in Regular Classrooms," Elementary School Journal 95 (1995): 387-408; Lynn S. Fuchs, Douglas Fuchs, Carol L. Hamlett, and Norris B. Phillips, "General Educators' Specialized Adaptation for Students with Learning Disabilities," Exceptional Children 61 (1995): 440-59; Douglas Fuchs, Lynn S. Fuchs, Patricia G. Mathes, and Deborah C. Simmons, "Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies: Making Classrooms More Responsive to Diversity," American Educational Research Journal 34 (1997): 174-206.

Team project discussed in the first part of this report.[70] I do not wish to take away from that discussion, but I think their experiences with classroom teachers can also be placed in some historical perspective:

In the experience of both generations of researchers and graduate students at Peabody College, the general skills of regular classroom teachers were insufficient to enable all students to be successful, even with additional training provided by the researchers and project staff members. Both generations of researchers were working with general classroom teachers in some ways, perhaps unrealized by them at the time, that the education of individuals with disabilities have always had to rely on those without initial training in special education. One could claim, in justified defense of the research projects in question, that these were innovative methodologies and that not all innovations succeed. Certainly, not all innovations deserve to succeed. Perhaps the skill level of general education classroom teachers is sufficiently low that we should not expect them to be able to teach most or even the majority of students with disabilities what they need to survive in the school system or in life. Perhaps some students with disabilities have such extremely challenging problems that no intervention is likely to be successful. However, all of these proposition once again return us to the issue of expectations, what we should expect of students and of schools, and the question of what one should "know how to do more." If one is to hope to have a school system that serves the needs of most students better than it does today, one must have higher expectations for experienced general classroom teachers in teaching students with disabilities.

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[70] Douglas and Lynn S. Fuchs, "Bridging the Research-to-Practice Gap with Mainstream Assistance Teams: A Cautionary Tale," School Psychology Quarterly 11 (Fall 1996): 244-66; Douglas and Lynn S. Fuchs, "Consultation as a Technology and the Politics of School Reform," Remedial and Special Education 17 (November 1996): 386-92; Douglas and Lynn S. Fuchs, "Researchers and Teachers Working Together To Adapt Instruction for Diverse Learners," Learning Disabilities Research and Practice 13 (1998): 126-37.

One practical consequence of this historical perspective—specifically the different ways in which special education at different times, and with very different program structures, has had to rely on general education teachers—is the requirement for more skilled general classroom teachers. Whether one is talking about decades ago when school systems asked general education teachers to become special educators, today as school systems ask paraprofessionals occasionally to become certain I special education teachers, or expectations today that general classroom teachers serve the needs of students who are disabled who are in their classrooms, the skill level of most classroom teachers and care professionals is a minimum threshold requirement for good education. What is necessary for innovative teaching is also, one might reasonably conclude, a requirement of good teaching in general. The policy implications of this are at once both obvious and perhaps a little disruptive to current priorities at the state and federal levels: the comprehensive system for professional development must including the skills of general classroom teachers in order to have a skilled teaching force to work with students with disabilities and students at risk of failing. Does this recommendation conflict with the observations at the end of the first part of this report? In one way: even the most careful professional development by itself is unlikely to change practice without modifying the culture of schools and how permeable schools are. However, the history of special education in Nashville suggests that, over the long term, schools have some permeability and have had to rely on general classroom teachers as resources for special education, and all of these ingredientsare required for a sensible approach to improving special education.

Appendix:

Grant Outcomes

Papers

Dorn, Sherman. 1999. How Research Gets Lost in Special Education. Paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Montreal, Que.).

Dorn, Sherman, and Douglas Fuchs. 1998. "The Lord Sent Cain and Abel": Heroic Myths in Special Education. Paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Diego, Calif.).

Dorn, Sherman. 1998. The Nonmaking and Making of Special Education Controversy: Local Special Education Debate (and Silence) in Nashville, Tennessee. . Paper presented at University of South Florida History Department Discussion Seminar (Tampa, Fla.).

The first two papers are available on my webpage at http://www.coedu.usf.edu/dorn/

Presentations

Dorn, Sherman. 1998. Unrecognized Signals: Race and Special Education in Nashville, Tennessee. Lecture at the CEC/DDEL Symposium on Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners (Washington, D.C.).

Dorn, Sherman. 1999. Health Confusion: When Research Gets Out of Control (for the Right Reasons). Presentation at the Institute on Black Life Spring Research Symposium, University of South Florida (Tampa, Fla.).

Dorn, Sherman. 1996. Poster session at the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs Division of Innovation and Development Project Directors Meeting (Washington, D.C.).

Future products

In process are final transcripts and permissions to deposit them at the Vanderbilt University Education Library, articles or book chapters from this report, material on disproportionate representation, and the imagined community of special education, and a book manuscript with a narrative history of special education in Nashville.

Finances

In August 1996, I moved from Vanderbilt University to the University of South Florida. The budget for the final two years of the project had approximately 56% of the direct costs slotted for salaries and benefits and 44% for expenses. The final calculated totals for expenses show 57% for salaries and benefits, 26% for expenses, 17% for unspent budget, and 7% for other personnel services, a category of the Florida financial accounting system not in the federal categories that combines independent contracting work and limited-term employment that would otherwise be under either expenses or salaries and benefits. The departmental contribution originally planned was for 8 percent in departmental research time in both project years (during the academic year). The actual departmental research time assigned in my first two academic years at the University of South Florida was over 20 percent.